UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- General Assembly adopts 14 resolutions in order to strengthen coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance; calls for assistance to Afghanistan, Croatia, Djibouti, El Salvador, Liberia, Mozambique, Somalia, front-line States and Palestinian People.

- General Assembly establishes open-ended working group to advance action-oriented agenda for development; closes United Nations Fund for Namibia; expresses support for Central American peace efforts.

- Former United States President Carter announces agreement on four-month cease-fire by Bosnian Government and Bosnian Serb leadership; UNHCR reports resumption of humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo and relative ease of movement through territory controlled by Bosnian Serbs.

- UNPROFOR completes arrangements for reopening of Zagreb-Belgrade international highway tomorrow; Highway Patrol Command established as confidence-building measure.

- Secretary-General appoints Major-General Johannes Kosters of Netherlands as Force Commander of UNDOF.

- ECLAC presents preliminary overview of economy of Latin America and Caribbean in 1994; reports continued growth and moderate inflation, but insufficient job creation.

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The General Assembly today adopted a consolidated series of 14 resolutions in order to strengthen the coordination of United Nations humanitarian and disaster relief assistance, including special economic assistance. By one resolution on the overall coordination of humanitarian assistance, the Assembly recognized the need to increase the resources available to the Central Emergency Revolving Fund. It also stressed the need to create a sound and stable financial basis for the Department of Humanitarian Affairs.

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Several of today's resolutions dealt with assistance to specific countries and regions. One requested the Secretary-General to authorize the special mission to Afghanistan to continue efforts towards national rapprochement and reconstruction. It urged all States to assist the restoration of basic services and the resettlement of refugees in Afghanistan. By another resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to appoint a fact-finding expert mission for Croatia. The mission would assess the extent of war damage there and consider the need to assist the Government in rehabilitation, reconstruction and development.

In another action, the Assembly urged all States and organizations to continue to implement Assembly resolution 47/160, regarding assistance to Somalia, and to support the Somali people in rehabilitating basic social and economic services. It appealed to the Somali parties to stop fighting and to engage in a national reconciliation process that would allow for a transition from relief to reconstruction and development. Today's resolutions also dealt with the need for assistance for Mozambique, Liberia, Djibouti, El Salvador, front-line States and the Palestinian People.

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The General Assembly has established an ad hoc open-ended working group to further elaborate an action-oriented agenda for development. It took that action yesterday, by one of 46 resolutions adopted on the recommendation of its Second Committee (Economic and Financial). The Assembly also closed the United Nations Fund for Namibia and transferred its assets to the Namibian Government; expressed support for the decision of the Central American Presidents to declare Central America a region of peace, democracy and development; and adopted a text on an African nuclear-weapon-free zone, recommended by its First Committee (Disarmament and International Security).

On the agenda for development, the Assembly decided that the working group should begin work early in 1995, and that it should consider the proposal to convene a United Nations conference on development. The Assembly also adopted a resolution on the foreign debt problem of developing countries, which recognized the need for more favourable relief measures, including a reduction of debt stock. In another text, it endorsed the Programme of Action adopted by the International Conference on Population and Development, and acknowledged that factors such as population, health, education and the empowerment of women were interconnected. It decided that a revitalized Population Commission should be renamed the Commission on Population and Development, to meet annually beginning in 1996. In a related resolution, the Assembly asked the Secretary-General to prepare a report on international migration and development, including aspects related to the convening of a United Nations conference on the subject.

Several resolutions referred to the outcome of the Uruguay Round of trade talks. The Assembly deplored any attempt to bypass agreed measures of trade liberalization through unilateral actions, over and above those agreed to in the Round. It also reaffirmed that environmental and social concerns should not be used for protectionist purposes.

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Former United States President Jimmy Carter today announced that the Bosnian Government and the Bosnian Serb leadership had agreed to a four-month cease-fire, according to a United Nations spokesman. Mr. Carter made that announcement in Zagreb, after visits to Sarajevo and Pale facilitated by the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR).

Meanwhile, the humanitarian airlift to Sarajevo resumed today, with four flights into the city. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) also reported relative ease of movement through territory controlled by Bosnian Serb forces. The Bosnian Serbs gave approval for 14 convoys today, but refused to allow a fuel convoy into the eastern enclave of Gorazde. However, the Croatian Serbs continued to present difficulties, blocking a medical supply convoy bound for the Bangladeshi battalion in the Bihac pocket for the seventh day in a row.

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Special Representative Yasushi Akashi today announced that UNPROFOR had completed its arrangements for the reopening of the Zagreb-Belgrade international highway. Barriers will be removed tomorrow, under the terms of the Economic Agreement signed by the Croatian Government and the Serb authorities in Knin on 2 December. Mr. Akashi said the reopening of the highway would bring substantial economic and social benefits to both sides, and represented a significant step towards the normalization of relations between them.

As a confidence-building measure, a United Nations Civilian Police (UNCIVPOL) Highway Patrol Command has been established, comprising 150 monitors. UNPROFOR's existing military deployment will provide additional security on both sides of the highway.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has decided to appoint Major-General Johannes Kosters of the Netherlands as Force Commander of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNPROFOR). The Force supervises the Israeli-Syrian Agreement on Disengagement of 1974.

Major-General Kosters will assume command of UNDOF in mid-January. He succeeds Major-General Roman Misztal of Poland, who was Force Commander from 1 October 1991 to 30 November 1994.

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The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) today presented its Preliminary Overview of the Economy of Latin America and the Caribbean 1994. According to ECLAC estimates, the region's gross domestic product grew by 3.7 per cent this year, compared to an annual average of 3.2 per cent in 1991-93. As a consequence, per capita income grew by 1.9 per

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cent. Meanwhile, prices appeared to be under control, with eight countries achieving single-digit inflation rates.

Latin American and Caribbean exports grew by 14 per cent to $153 billion in 1994, assisted by economic recovery in the industrial countries and the resulting expansion of international trade. Despite the improved economic situation, not enough jobs were created in most countries in the region. Restructuring continued to reduce the demand for labour, while the labour force grew at a rapid rate, stimulated by higher rates of participation.

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